

Columbia Slope Watershed

Description of the watershed

The 25-square-mile Columbia Slope watershed consists of a narrow band of hillsides that drain to the Columbia River between downtown Vancouver and Lacamas Creek. Its northern boundary generally follows Mill Plain Boulevard and hilltops in Camas, including Prune Hill.

Fisher and Joseph's creeks are the only named creeks in the watershed. Fisher Creek is near the boundary of Camas and Vancouver. Joseph's Creek flows only a short distance from the marshes east of the Vancouver Trout Hatchery to the Columbia River. Springs are plentiful in the gravel deposits along the area's hillsides. Ellsworth Springs, near Interstate 205, is probably the most notable. Vancouver once used these springs as a water source.

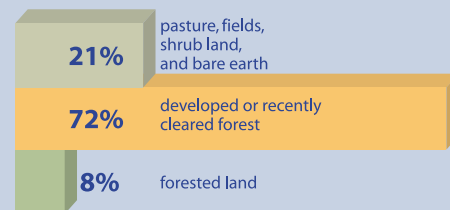
Nearly all the Columbia Slope watershed is within the cities of Vancouver and Camas. Except for some wetlands, parks, and steep hills, most of the area is urbanized or currently subject to urban development.

Wintler Park and Marine Park provide access to the Columbia River. Trails on or near the river include the 2.3-mile Discovery Trail near downtown Vancouver and the 0.8-mile Evergreen Highway

Trail near the Interstate 205 bridge. There are several undeveloped public beaches along the river. The Water Resources Education Center at Marine Park and the Columbia Springs Environmental Education Center at the Vancouver Trout Hatchery on Evergreen Highway are open to the public and provide environmental education with an emphasis on water resources.

Large numbers of chum salmon and some coho spawn in the Columbia River at Woods Landing. The Washington Fish and Wildlife Department reports that Woods Landing had the largest number of chum salmon seen in the Columbia River from Grays River to Bonneville. Chum salmon and steelhead have also been reported in lower Joseph's Creek.

Land uses in the Columbia Slope Watershed



Using a summer 2000 satellite image, the University of Washington determined that the Columbia Slope watershed is approximately 71% urban, 8% forest, and 21% area grassy areas or fields.

How healthy are Columbia Slope watershed streams?

No stream health information was available that met the criteria for use in this report.

This lack of data makes it difficult to identify Columbia Slope stream health problems with certainty. However, considering what we know about areas with similar land uses, Columbia Slope streams

should have all of the problems of streams in urban areas. Likely problems include excessive amounts of fecal bacteria, chemical pollutants in runoff, and erosion of stream channels by excessive stormwater runoff.

